



United States Air Force

ONLINE news

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NEWSBYTES

ON publication dates

Today's Online News is the final issue for 1999.

The newspaper will not be published Dec. 29 or Jan. 5. The first issue for 2000 will be Jan. 12.

Promotional rate

The Air Force club membership MasterCard program has a special limited time offer for a 9.99 percent promotional rate to eligible non-club members as an incentive to join either the officers' or enlisted military clubs.

Although this initiative targets eligible non-club members, the promotional rate has been made available to existing members who qualify, transfer a balance of \$500 or more and wish to request this value added incentive rate.

Existing members with MasterCard club membership accounts who want to be considered for the promotional rate should call 1-888-240-8394 prior to Feb. 1. (Courtesy of Air Force Services Agency Public Affairs)

AEFs roll out

Nos. 3, 4 deploy on schedule, rotations continue

WASHINGTON - The Air Force continues the Expeditionary Aerospace Force transition by moving toward standard 90-day Aerospace Expeditionary Force rotations with this month's deployment of AEFs 3 and 4.

Nearly three months into the EAF role, the service continues to align people, aircraft and equipment into 10 AEFs and two crisis response Aerospace Expeditionary Wings.

The EAF transition began Oct. 1 when AEFs 1 and 2 deployed in the first transitional step using a 60-day window. Their replacements, AEFs 3 and 4, began the standard 90-day rotation schedule.

Despite AEF 1 and 2's transition deployments, Air Force officials say they will be credited the same as a full rotation. "AEFs 1 and 2 are not scheduled to be tasked for another standard rotation for 15 months," said Lt. Col. David Aldrich, chief, EAF Implementation Division's Outreach Branch at Air Staff.

"The EAF will bring a level of stabil-



Image by U.S. Air Force

U.S. Air Force aircraft deploy.

ity and predictability the troops have not seen in the past," said Col. Ronald G. Oholendt, vice commander, 388th Wing at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, which is aligned to AEF 1.

"Once an individual is assigned to an AEF, ideally they will not be tasked to deploy outside of their normal AEF rotation. This enables them to plan their lives around their AEF vulnerability periods," he said.

Continued on Page 3

Air Force releases initial C-130 crash findings

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, ILL. — The Air Force released information Dec. 20 about the ongoing investigation into a C-130E aircraft accident at Ahmed Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait, Dec. 10.

The C-130 was on a rotator mission ferrying newly arrived members to operational bases at Ahmed Al Jaber and Ali Al Salem ABs, Kuwait. As the aircraft was returning to Ahmed Al Jaber it hit the ground approximately 2,895

feet short and forty feet left of the runway centerline.

Although the crew was able to get the aircraft airborne, the C-130 sustained extensive damage to its main landing gear assemblies and to the adjacent fuselage areas.

While regaining altitude the aircraft hit a ground-based Instrument Landing System antenna causing additional damage to the right horizontal stabilizer. The remaining portions of the left and

right main landing gear came to rest on and near the runway threshold past the ILS antenna.

During the initial impact, three passengers seated in the fuselage area where the main landing gear attaches to the airframe were fatally injured. Three firemen and one medic aboard the aircraft performed resuscitation efforts until after landing.

This article available in its entirety online.

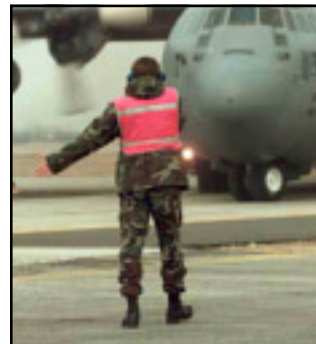


Image by U.S. Air Force



Letters to the editor

U.S. Air Force Online News publishes letters based on their appeal to an Air Force-wide audience each week. Send your letter to the U.S. Air Force Online News staff by completing the online form at <http://www.af.mil/newspaper/>

Due to the number of letters, not all letters can be published. Letters may be edited for grammar and length. Only letters accompanied by a valid name and email address will be considered.

Medal without meaning

I watched a technical sergeant receive a Good Conduct Medal ... recently. As it was presented ... it struck me how degrading this medal is to the enlisted corps. The fact that it doesn't count toward promotion tells exactly how much Air Force leaders value it. To take a career noncommissioned officer and pat him on the back for behaving, "Good boy! Here's a bone," is a slap in the face. Maybe it's time to change or get rid of the Good Conduct Medal.

Staff Sgt. Daniel Berry
Peterson AFB, Colo.

Dwindling benefits

Regarding "Think twice before leaving," Dec. 15, I would just like to say: Exactly ... One problem, you just argued the wrong side. You can't wait to make the Air Force a career once you receive your commission, but most of the retention problems are with the enlisted side of the Air Force. If the young people who are

leaving were making the money of an officer they would most likely stay. The truth of the matter is that benefits are dwindling and there is no end in sight.

Senior Airman Jason L. Whitman
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska

Freedom has its limits

... I also believe in freedom of speech ... Everyone has every right to watch what they want on TV ... However, do the Air Force and Navy not have the right to pull their ads ... if they feel the show does not represent the morals and values they stand for? Today it seems people scream "my rights, freedom and liberty," so much that the words do not have the meaning they should. Everything has limits — even freedom. ... When they start telling you that you are not allowed to watch wrestling, then I will join you in your outrage.

Staff Sgt. Todd Benjamin
Minot AFB, N.D.

AF leaders send holiday greetings

by **F. Whitten Peters**
Secretary of the Air Force, and
Gen. Michael E. Ryan
Air Force Chief of Staff

Each year during the holiday season, we gather with friends and family to give thanks for the blessings of the past year and to establish resolutions for the future. This particular season is unique because we are about to leave a spectacular 20th century behind and move with great optimism into the next millennium.

You should take great pride in the knowledge that as we close this century our nation has a pervasive and growing appreciation for the importance and potential of aerospace power. Your victory in Kosovo, a major theater air war, was a magnificent display of teamwork, professionalism, and leadership made

possible by the total Air Force team — active duty, Reserve, Air Guard and civilians. You moved people and equipment with lightning speed and prosecuted a brilliant air campaign that brought to bear all of our core competencies in a righteous cause with a just outcome.

You proved that the expeditionary aerospace force is not just a vision — it is reality. The New Year holds great promise as we continue the journey of reshaping ourselves for the new century.

We are immensely proud of you and honored to serve with you. We thank you and your families for your service and your sacrifices. If you can, please take time out to enjoy your families and friends. If duty has you away from hearth and home, know that a grateful nation thanks you and keeps you in its thoughts and prayers.

We wish all the men and women of the Air Force family a safe and joyous holiday season and a wonderful and exciting New Year!





DOD Anthrax shots continue

By Senior Airman A. J. Bosker
Headquarters United States Air Force

WASHINGTON - Phase one of the Air Force's anthrax vaccination program, which uses the current supply of FDA certified vaccine, is still on track.

According to Col. Harvey R. Crowder, chief of the Air Force Medical Operations Agency's Prevention Division, the vaccine manufacturer's production facility not achieving FDA certification should only affect phase two and three of the vaccination program.

Phase One directs the vaccination of those who are in, or transiting, high-threat areas such as the Persian Gulf or Korea. **Phase Two** requires early deploying troops to high-threat areas to receive the vaccinations.

Phase Three calls for the vaccination of all other active duty and reserve forces.

"There is an adequate supply of the vaccine, approximately one million doses, to continue the current rate of vaccination - about 75,000 doses per month - until February 2001," said Col. Crowder. "And we continue to work with the FDA to verify the quality of our vaccine supply."

Of the current supply, 400,000 doses have received FDA approval and are ready to be shipped while the other 600,000 are in the approval process and should be ready in three to five months."

This article available in its entirety online.

Raptor continues on track

WASHINGTON - An Air Force program official expressed continued confidence that the F-22 program will meet projected delivery schedules and cost limitations.



The F-22 Raptor during a recent in-flight refueling test mission.

Speaking Dec. 7 before the House subcommittee on national security, veterans affairs and international relations, Darleen Druyun, principal deputy assistant for Air Force acquisition and management, said, "I believe that we will be able to meet the schedule we have clearly laid out here."

Also speaking before

the committee was Dr. George Schneider, Department of Defense director of strategic and tactical systems, who spoke about the DOD's efforts to control costs and adhere to the F-22 schedule.

Adjusted cost limits for the F-22 program are \$18.9 billion for Engineering and Manufacturing Development and \$39.759 billion for production. The caps were mandated by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal 1998.

Mrs. Druyun countered written testimony by the Government Accounting Office that the Air Force is not doing enough to limit costs.

She cited several milestones the program has achieved to date and the initiatives under way to offset a projected "worst-case" analysis of \$660 million in engineering and manufacturing development costs above the cost cap, cited by a March 1999 GAO report.

This article available in its entirety online.

Some captains, majors offered continuation

By Staff Sgt. Cynthia Miller
Headquarters United States Air Force

WASHINGTON - Officer manning levels have prompted the Air Force to offer selective continuation to all deferred line captains and to expand continuation for deferred line and Judge Advocate General majors.

Selective continuation is a tool the services use to manage manning levels. Until now, twice-deferred captains were separated, and twice-deferred majors in JAG and non-critical specialties were offered continuation to retirement eligibility.

Continuation now allows deferred cap-

tains to remain in active service for up to 20 years and majors for up to 24 years providing they are judged fully qualified to serve in their current grade.

Officers accepting continuation incur a one year service commitment to the Air Force.

"Even though we're offering continuation up to 24 years, people aren't bound to stay until then," said Major Earl R. Nason, chief of Officer Force Structure and Policy on the Air Staff. "They can separate or retire anytime after they complete their active duty service commitments."

This article available in its entirety online.

Air Force successfully deploys AEFs 3, 4

Continued from Page 1

Colonel Aldrich cautions, however, that rotation cycles pertain to steady-state deployments such as Operations Northern Watch and Southern Watch.

"There's a difference between a deployment and other TDYs [temporary duties]," he said. "A team member may fulfill their AEF rotation, and then be scheduled outside that three-month window for routine training TDYs, such as in-resi-

dence enlisted PME [professional military education], exercises, or intra-command manning assistance.

"That is how the AEF cycle recognizes the multitude of activities Air Force people are involved with," Colonel Aldrich said. "There are deployments, which we can schedule better, and there are TDY demands. We have to remember that Air Force people are busy folks; AEF schedule predictability gives them much better stability in their lives."

To distribute deployment requirements across the total force, AEF identifies deployable people and assets by unit type code (UTCs). This includes active duty, Air National Guard and Reserve forces.

UTCs present Air Force capabilities and are apportioned across the 10 AEFs, Colonel Aldrich said. AEFs offer the service another force management tool for handling tempo demands as the service enters the 21st century.

This article available in its entirety online.



Ready for duty

Y2K won't slow down defense department

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department is fully ready to protect the security of the United States during the Y2K computer rollover according to Dr. John Hamre, Deputy Secretary of Defense.

By monitoring the fixing, testing and certification of over 2,101 mission critical systems and 5,488 mission support systems, DoD ensured all defense systems needed for key functions are compliant — in particular, nuclear, communications and defense logistics systems.

"The Department of Defense has invested immense effort and long hours to fix our systems and safeguard our security," Dr. Hamre said. "This successful completion effort, started in late 1995 and accelerated in the last 18 months, is a tribute to the dedication of DoD's military personnel and civilian employees."

By focusing their efforts on federal "high impact programs" — key systems which pay defense personnel and provide for military health care - DoD has ensured that the military health care system, military hospitals, and all pay and personnel systems for active duty, civilian and retiree personnel are Y2K ready.

To accomplish this, DoD conducted the largest, most comprehensive testing effort in its history.

"Not only have we tested our systems,

but to ensure we can protect the nation's security, each system has a fully validated back-up, or contingency plan," Dr. Hamre said. "Each service, agency, and warfighting command has tested these plans in exercises."

Among the department's Y2K preparations was the establishment of the Center for Y2K Strategic Stability in Colorado Springs, Colo. In the center, U.S. and Russian military personnel will sit side-by-side during the Y2K transition period and continuously monitor U.S.-provided information on missile and space launches. These representatives will be in contact with command centers in the

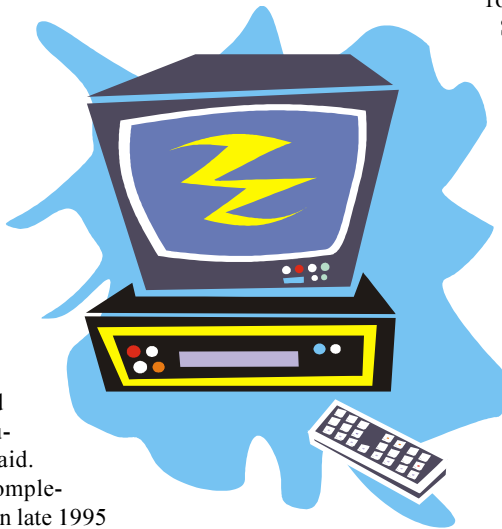
U.S. and Russia via a Y2K-tested communications link.

The Center for Y2K Strategic Stability compliments steps taken by the U.S. and Russia to ensure the reliability of their warning systems, nuclear weapons and command and control capabilities.

"The American public can be confident the Department of Defense is Y2K ready," Dr. Hamre said.

More information on DoD's Y2K preparations is available at:

<http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/y2k/>



T-Birds soar during 111th Rose Parade

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds and a B-2 Spirit stealth bomber will open the 111th Rose Parade with flyovers Jan. 1 in Pasadena, Calif.

This will be the Thunderbirds' first appearance over the Rose Parade and the B-2's second. The Thunderbirds will return later to fly over the 86th Rose Bowl football game.

In keeping with the parade's theme of "Visions of the Future," the Air Force has formed a marching band based on its concept of the Expeditionary Aerospace Force — a fighting force team capable of assembling on a moment's notice. The Air Force's total force band has members from eight active-duty bands, the Air National Guard Band of Southern California, and the Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve.

As the total force band rounds the corner of Orange Grove and Colorado boulevards, the Thunderbirds will fly over in a Delta formation at an altitude of about 1,000 feet at 400 miles per hour. The six F-16 Fighting Falcons will be only 18 inches to three feet apart.

This article available in its entirety online.



The Thunderbirds in action.



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